
Preventing Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

*Talk About Sexual Violence
Project Staff*

*Healthy Brain Initiative Webinar
March 22, 2022
2:00 pm ET*



*National Center on
Criminal Justice & Disability*

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The Arc of the United States

- Mission

To promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

- Policy, program, and legal advocacy
- 600+ chapters across the country



National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability (NCCJD)



- Created in 2013 with support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
- Advocate at the intersection of criminal justice reform and the advancement of disability rights
 - Work on both victim/witness issues and on issues facing those who are charged with crimes
- Portfolio of five projects and other contracts totaling over \$500k
- Support people with IDD and chapter network to lead this work

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Training and technical assistance

- Pathways to Justice®
www.nccjdpathwaystojustice.org
- Community-based program that creates Disability Response Teams (or DRTs)



Information and referral

- For people with disabilities and their families as well as criminal justice and allied professionals
- <https://thearc.org/our-initiatives/criminal-justice/>



Resource collection and creation

- Policy briefs, fact sheets, other publications



Education

- Social media, webinars, and conferences

NCCJD Resources on Victimization

- Training and technical assistance
 - Including Pathways to Justice[®] trainings and creating Disability Response Teams)
- Publications
 - White paper on victimization, fact sheets, etc.
- Projects with focus on outreach to victims
 - Talk About Sexual Violence, Know Your Rights series



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Pathways to Justice[®]

STEP 1:
Disability
Response
Team (DRT)

STEP 2:
Training
for Justice
Professionals

STEP 3:
Ongoing
Technical
Assistance



**The Arc of New Jersey Pilot
Pathways to Justice (2015)**

Pathways Principles:

- Nothing about us, without us
- Community-based
- Multidisciplinary
- Relationship-oriented

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NCCJD's Projects & Initiatives

- *BJA: Serving Safely – A National Training & TA Center for Law Enforcement on MH and I/DD*
- **OVC: Healing Crime Victims with Disabilities (on-line toolkit)**
- *WITH Foundation: Talk About Sexual Violence (focus on males)*
- Kessler Foundation: JusticeWorks (training)
- **People with Disabilities Foundation (Know Your Rights series)**
- Open Society Foundations (international knowledge hub)
- Small contracts with OVC and Council of State Governments
- COPS Office within DOJ (videos), **Natl Coalition for Sexual Health**, and Natl Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, LRIDD.org



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Victims



*Cognitive disabilities include Down syndrome, autism, dementia, learning disabilities, intellectual disability, and traumatic brain injury.

Barriers



to Justice

- Reports of victimization are not believed
- Cases may go unprosecuted, especially if there are communication challenges
- Inaccessible services and supports

A Note on Intersectionality



*Queer women with disabilities v. all
queer women who experience
domestic abuse*



*Men of color with
disabilities v. white men
with disabilities arrested by 28*

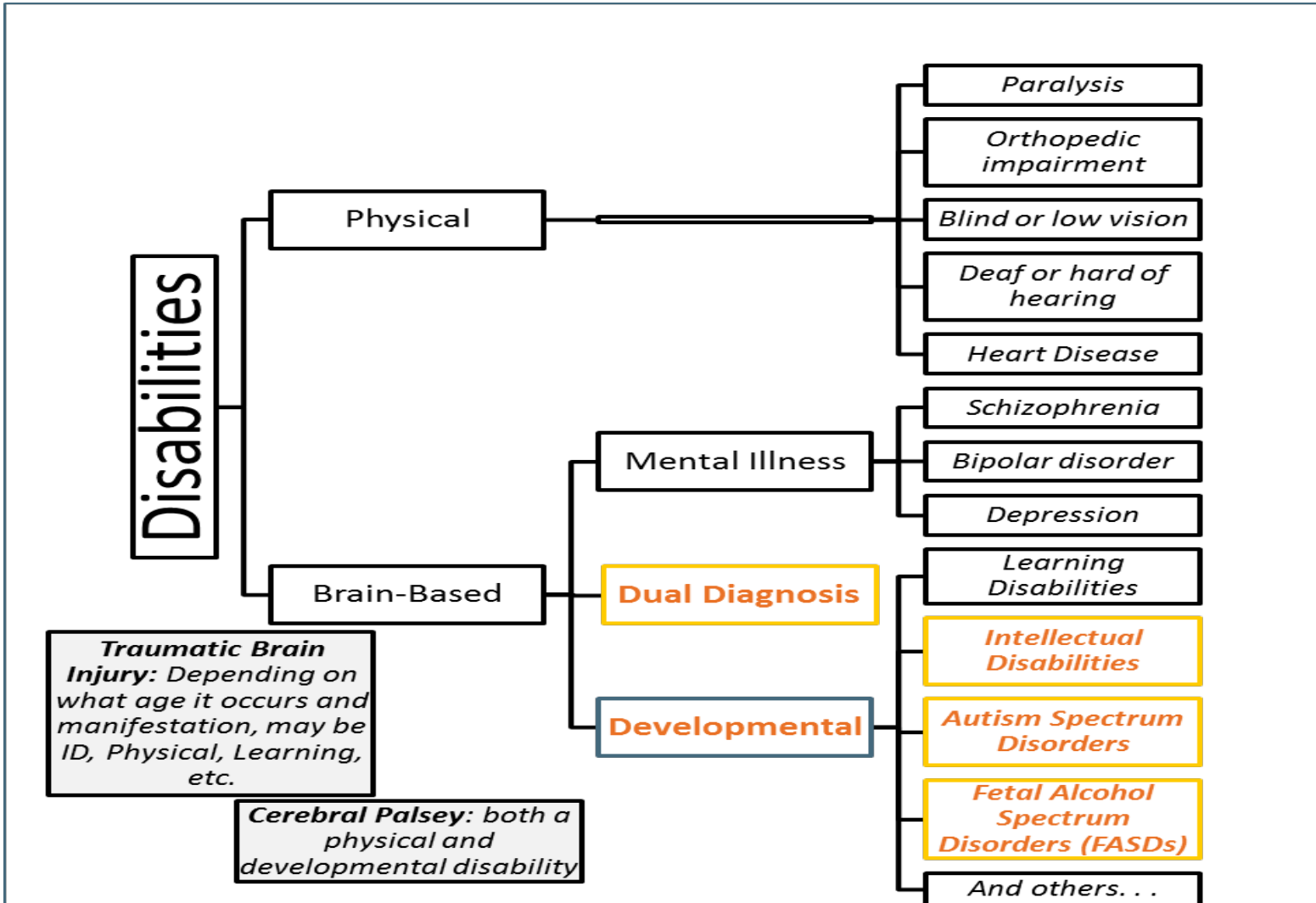


Violence Takes Many Forms

- Neglect
- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Bullying & cyberbullying



31 year-old Carl DeBrodie disappeared from his Independent supported living home in April 2017. Days later his body was found encased in concrete at a Fulton storage unit.



Challenges for IDD, TBI or Aging Community in Addressing Violence

- Victim service providers don't know about the issue, or understand how critical it is, or how to connect to disability organizations
- Different cultures and terminology than anti-violence or sexual assault organizations
- Lack of opportunity to work together, co-train, and learn from each other
- Few funding streams or opportunities

Elder Abuse Research

- *Abuse in the community*
 - A meta-analysis study found that 1 in 6 elders, or 15.7%, in the community experienced some form of abuse in the past year (2017)
 - A more recent study on abuse of older women found that 1 in 6 experienced abuse in the prior year (2019)
- *Abuse in institutions*
 - Fewer studies but those conducted show high levels of abuse (psychological – 33.4%, physical – 14.1%, financial – 13.8%, neglect 11.6% and sexual abuse – 1.9%) (2019)



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Source: https://ncea.acl.gov/What-We-Do/Research/Statistics-and-Data.aspx#_edn29

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Violence & Disability/Elder Population

- **Unique challenges**: Know the unique challenges people with disabilities face throughout the system
- **One size does not fit all**: Knowing one person with a disability means *you know ONE PERSON with a disability*
- **Safety for all**: Disability is a human rights issue just like race, gender identity, and religion



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Considerations for Victims

- Heightened risk and lack of education about that risk
- Ability or decision to report (issues with mandatory reporting)
- Professionals' receipt of the report (credibility issues)
- Medical treatment (what is available/accessible?)
- Access to advocates (peer and otherwise)
- Lack of inclusive and accessible crime victim or healing services



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James Meadours and Kecia Weller



People with intellectual and developmental disabilities deserve a life free from abuse. Sexual violence is too often ignored or excused.



Join the conversation, talk about sexual violence and end the silent epidemic of abuse!



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NPR's Abused & Betrayed Series

The rate of rape and sexual assault against people with intellectual disability is **more than seven times** the rate for people without disabilities.

Image: Three pictures of people with disabilities whose stories were shared in NPR's Abused and Betrayed series.



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- At least 1 in 6 men have been sexually assaulted
- PSA - first time included a man with disabilities
- Over 4 million views to date
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2p06x-yumc0>

Image: Picture of man (James Meadours) shaking hands with woman who just read his story about surviving sexual assault for the first time. Both are sitting on stools and smiling.



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Talk about Sexual Violence



How to Have the Conversation with Health Care Providers



Look for signs of
sexual assault

talkaboutsexualviolence.org



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Stronger Together & The National Peer Support Project

- Created in 2019 through support from Massachusetts-based Building Partnerships for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities Initiative (BPI)
- Mission: *Address sexual violence against persons with disabilities on a national scale through active collaboration self-advocate survivors, federal and state agencies, and other partner organizations*



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Taking the Next Step

- Break out of the disability bubble & partner with victim advocates and agencies whenever possible
- Apply the lens of intersectionality
- Support self-advocates as leaders in movements to end all forms of violence
- Be innovative when equipping the victim advocacy community to help victims with IDD



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What You Can Do

- Think about your own journey and the champions for justice who've inspired you
- Support research, policy and programs that seek to make lasting change
- Build strong collaborations with partners at the community, national and international level
- Stay informed and be proactive!



Talk About Sexual Violence Team

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